



NORTH WITCHEFORD RURAL DISTRICT COUNCIL

A N N U A L R E P O R T ,
OF
THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

for the year ended
31st December, 1965.

ANNUAL REPORT OF THE MEDICAL OFFICER OF HEALTH

for the year ending 31st December, 1965.

The Lindens,
Doddington,
March, Cambs.
Tel: Doddington 206.

MR. CHAIRMAN and GENTLEMEN,

I beg to present to you my report for the year 1965 on the health condition of your district during that period.

I also present the Public Health Inspector's report.

I have the honour to be,

Your obedient servant,

CECIL THOMAS,

Medical Officer of Health.

GENERAL PROVISION FOR HEALTH SERVICES.

(1) Public Health Committee.

This comprises the whole Council.

(2) Public Health Officers.

Medical Officer of Health - CECIL THOMAS, M.R.C.S., L.R.C.P.
Public Health Inspector - JOHN METCALFE, M.R.S.H.

(3) Nursing in the Home.

The entire district has the services of Trained Nurses under the control of the Local Authority.

(4) Hospital.

Most patients are now treated at Doddington Hospital.

(5) Ambulance Facilities.

These are controlled by the County Council.

(6) Child Welfare.

Clinics are held at Doddington and Manea.

SOCIAL CONDITIONS.

The number of adults engaged on agricultural work continue to decrease with the drift towards factory employment in nearby towns. Seasonal employment on farm work is still available for many members of the female adult population.

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GENERAL STATISTICS.

Area (acres)	24,701
Population (estimated mid year by Registrar General) ...	4,580
Number of inhabited houses	1,586
Rateable Value	£98,734
Estimated net product of a penny rate	£375

The estimated population for mid year is below the figure for the census return in 1961 which was 4,737.

VITAL STATISTICS.

Live Births.

Number	50
Rate per 1000 population	10.91

Illegitimate Live Births per cent of total live births 8.00

Still Births.

Number	1
Rate per 1000 total live and still births ...	19.60

Total Live and Still Births.. ... 51

Infant Deaths (deaths under 1 year) ... Nil

Infant Mortality Rates.

Total infant deaths per 1000 total live births..	Nil
Legitimate " " " " legitimate live births	Nil
Illegitimate " " " " illegitimate " "	Nil

Neo-natal Mortality Rate (deaths under 4 weeks per 1000 total live births)... Nil

Early Neo-natal Mortality Rate (deaths under 1 week per 1000 total live births ... Nil

Perinatal Mortality Rate (stillbirths and deaths under 1 week combined per 1000 total live and still births) 19.60

Maternal Mortality (including abortion)

Number of deaths.. ...	Nil
Rate per 1000 total live and still births. ...	Nil

Deaths in Area and Causes:

	<u>M.</u>	<u>F.</u>	<u>Total</u>
Syphilitic Disease	1	1	2
Malignant Neoplasm stomach	1	1	2
Malignant neoplasm, lung, bronchus	1	1	2
Malignant neoplasm, breast	-	1	1
Other malignant & lymphatic neoplasms	4	2	6
Vascular lesions of nervous system	2	2	4
Coronary disease, angina	8	2	10
Other heart disease	2	3	5
Other circulatory disease	-	1	1
Pneumonia	1	1	2
Bronchitis	1	1	2
Other defined and ill-defined diseases	-	2	2
	<u>21</u>	<u>18</u>	<u>39</u>

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The death rate for the Rural District in 1965 was 8.51 per 1,000 population compared with 11.68 for the previous year.

NOTIFIABLE INFECTIOUS DISEASES.

	<u>Total Notified.</u>
Scarlet Fever	3
Acute Primary Pneumonia	1
Influenzal Pneumonia	1
Measles	14
Whooping Cough	<u>1</u>
Total	<u>20</u>

FOOD POISONING OUTBREAKS.

There were no cases of food poisoning notified in the Rural District during 1965.

PUBLIC HEALTH INSPECTOR'S REPORT FOR THE YEAR 1965.

SANITARY INSPECTION OF THE AREA.

The following are the numbers of visits and inspections carried out during 1965.

Improvement Grant Inspections	...	...	...	...	44.
Water Supply	...	...	...	...	3.
Drainage	...	...	...	...	40.
Fried Fish Shops.	...	...	...	...	4.
Vans and sheds...	...	...	...	...	17.
Factory Acts Inspections (including building projects)					46.
Bakehouses..	...	...	...	...	2.
Sanitary Accommodation.	...	...	...	...	9.
Refuse Dumps	...	...	...	...	8.
Rats and Mice (including premises visited by Rodent Operator)	...	...	...	...	26.
Manure and Refuse Accumulations	...	...	...	...	2.
Miscellaneous Sanitary Visits	...	...	...	...	19.
Nightsoil Disposal	...	...	...	...	3.
Sewers and Sewage Disposal Works	..	...	...	...	99.
Dykes	...	...	...	...	21.
Buildings under Construction and Alteration	...	...	...	...	321.
New drain tests..	...	...	...	...	52.
Sewer Tests	...	...	...	...	86.
Petroleum Installations	...	...	...	...	22.
Poultry Farms and Piggeries..	...	...	...	...	8.
Infectious Disease Inquiries	...	...	...	...	1.
Offices Shops and Railway Premises.	...	...	...	...	23.

INSPECTIONS OF DWELLING HOUSES.

- (1) Number of houses inspected under Public Health Acts and Housing Consolidated Regulations (excluding Council Houses).. ... 27.
- (2) Number of houses surveyed for Slum Clearance (not included in (1)) ... 14.
- (3) Number of inspections for the above purposes (1) and (2) (including re-inspections). ... 50.
- (4) Number of dwellings inspected under Rent Act, 1957... Nil.
- (5) Inspections of Verminous or Dirty Dwellings ... 1.
- (6) Number of Inspections and Visits to houses in connection with Improvement Grants ... 44.
- (7) Number of Visits to Council Houses - Repairs, maintenance, and complaints, etc. ... 2215.

MEAT AND FOOD INSPECTION.

Butchers' Shops...	...	...	...	...	16.
Grocers' Shops	...	...	...	...	21.
Ice Cream Premises (Retail)...	...	...	...	...	8.

HOUSING.

During 1965 the Council completed the erection of 4 two bedroom bungalows and 4 three bedroom houses on a new site at Chapel Gardens, Benwick, which had been commenced during the previous year.

Eight 2 bedroom bungalows were also built on land already

owned by the Council at Doddington, and this small estate was named "Knight's Close" in commemoration of Councillor, Mrs. A. Knight.

Twelve dwellings were erected by private enterprise and nine were under construction at the end of the year; these included a small private estate in Wimblington named St. Peter's Drive.

Two bungalows were erected by the Cambridgeshire & Isle of Ely County Council to replace obsolete dwellings on Smallholdings, and a pair of houses and two more bungalows were in course of erection at the end of the year.

The number of vacant farm cottages continues to increase, these are usually situated in isolated areas so that many of them would not be suitable for letting privately. Some of the cottages are used for agricultural storage purposes and in most cases they deteriorate and eventually are demolished. At the end of the year there were 79 empty houses in the District, of which 31 were the subject of action under the Housing Acts (Closing and Demolition Orders, etc.) 21 were probable or possible relettings, and the remaining 27 were unlikely to be used again for human habitation. The number of occupied houses at 31/12/65 was 1,586 as against 1,600 recorded at the 1961 census.

Summary of the post war development in the Rural District:-

Rural District Council	232	dwellings
County Council Departments	11	"
Drainage Boards	4	"
Hospital Board	2	"
Private Enterprise	170	"
Private Enterprise (Conversions)	<u>2</u>	"
	<u>421</u>	

Further progress was made on Slum Clearance as can be seen from the following figures:-

Demolition Orders made	...	...	...	...	...	5.
Houses demolished as result of Demolition Orders						
or voluntarily by owners..	...	...	...	...	...	14.
Closing Orders made...	...	...	...	...	...	3.
Closing Orders revoked after houses reconditioned...						1.
Undertakings revoked after houses have been						
reconditioned	...	...	...	...	...	2.
Houses made fit and houses in which defects						
were remedied						
after informal action by District Council...	...	...	...	...	...	11.
Dwellings lost to housing in 1965 consequent to						
change of use	...	...	...	...	...	3.
Total number of dwellings demolished or closed during						
the period from 1st January, 1955 to						
31st December, 1965.	...	...	...	...	...	149.

IMPROVEMENT GRANTS.

There were no applications submitted for Discretionary Improvement Grants in 1965.

The number of applications for standard grants under the House Purchase & Housing Act, 1959, as amended by the Housing Acts, 1961 and 1964, showed a slight reduction from the previous year, being 14 as against 18. The total value of the grants approved amounted to £2,422.11.4d.

Four of these schemes, together with eleven earlier schemes, were completed during 1965 and grants amounting to £3,217. 2. 2d. were paid.

The amenities provided under Standard Grant schemes completed in 1965 were as follows:-

Baths	17
Wash Basins	17
Hot Water systems	18
Water Closets	16
Larders	3

44 inspections (including reinspections) were made at premises in respect of improvement schemes.

No application was received for Grant under Section 46 of the Housing (Financial Provisions) Act, 1958, in connection with the erection of new dwellings by private enterprise.

BUILDING BYELAWS.

106 plans were deposited with the Council under their Building Byelaws, all of which were approved with the exception of one plan which did not comply with the requirements of the rear air space byelaw. Planning permission was refused by the County Planning Authority for one plan. 321 inspections were made of premises in course of erection or alteration, etc. under the Byelaws. Tests of new drains were carried out at 52 premises. The Building Byelaws operating in the Council's area are similar to the Model issued by the Ministry of Housing and Local Government and came into operation on the 7th November, 1953.

WATER SUPPLY.

The statutory Water Authority for the area is the Wisbech & District Water Board. 10 dwellings on the outskirts of the Rural District are served by Water Undertakings from other areas.

The following information is supplied at the request of the Ministry of Housing and Local Government:-

(i) There has been a plentiful supply of water throughout the area served by Board's mains and there have been no complaints as to quality of the water supplied by the Board.

(ii) Normally routine independent sampling of piped water supplied is not carried out by the Council, as the Water Board's Chemist carries out frequent bacteriological examinations of the mains water at selected sampling points.

(iii) No action by the Council was necessary in respect of contamination.

(iv) The local supply of water is not plumbo-solvent

(v) Proportion of dwelling houses supplied from public mains:-

<u>Parish</u>	<u>No. of Occupied Houses.</u>	<u>No. with mains water.</u>	<u>No. without mains water.</u>	<u>Percentage Connected.</u>
Benwick	225	224	1	99.55.
Doddington	446	440	6	98.65.
Manea (including Welches Dam).	468	464	4	99.14.
Wimblington (including Stonea).	<u>447</u>	<u>441</u>	<u>6</u>	<u>98.65.</u>
Totals	<u>1586</u>	<u>1569</u>	<u>17</u>	<u>98.92.</u>

Most of the few houses without mains water are situated remote from the nearest mains and it is not economically possible to take the water to them. The number has been reduced by 9 during the year as a result of demolitions and vacated houses in the fens.

For the following schedule of work carried out in North Witchford Rural District during 1965, and Water Analyses, I am indebted to Mr. Cyril Llanwarne, B.Sc.Tech., A.M.I.C.E., A.M.I.W.E., Water Engineer, and Mr. J. S. Collins, Chemist and Bacteriologist of the Wisbech and District Water Board:-

New Mains Laid:

Knight's Close, off Wood Street, Doddington.	80 yards	2" P.V.C.
Chapel Gardens Estate, Benwick.	320 "	3" "
St. Peter's Drive, off Addison Road, Wimblington.	<u>179</u> "	3" "
Total length of main laid	<u>579 yards</u>	

New Connections:

Benwick	10
Doddington	9
Manea	1
Wimblington	<u>10</u>
Total	<u>30</u>

Water Analyses 1965 - North Witchford Rural District.

In order to maintain a pure and wholesome supply to the district, frequent bacteriological examinations have been undertaken during 1965, on samples from the Board's sourceworks and the distribution system in this and adjoining areas. The results have been of a very high standard. Many chemical analyses have also been carried out.

All new mains were sterilised, samples taken and bacteriological examinations made before the mains were put into service. No connections were permitted until the water in the mains was of the highest standard of purity.

Bacteriological Samples taken in the North Witchford Rural District and adjoining areas.

Place of Sampling.	Total Tests Taken.	No.of Tests Negative.	No.of Tests Positive.	Percentage Negative Tests.
March	51	51	--	100%
Doddington	48	48	--	100%
Chatteris	104	104	--	100%
Manea	50	50	--	100%
Totals	253	253	--	100%

DRAINAGE & SEWERAGE.

Benwick has a modern sewerage system which came into operation in 1963, and the samples of effluent taken by the Great Ouse River Authority during the year have been up to Royal Commission standard. The number of connections made to the new sewers in 1965 was 14 (including 11 new dwellings) making a total of 132 since the scheme came into operation. 120 yards of 6" diameter pitch fibre sewer were laid on a new housing estate.

Good progress was made during the year on the new sewerage scheme for Manea, 1,808 yards of 6" diameter salt glazed stoneware pipes with flexible joints were laid, mainly in public roads, making a total of 3,489 yards since the scheme commenced towards the end of July, 1964. With the exception of one line of sewer over the allotments, all the sewers were laid by the end of March, 1965, which was over a period of 8 months including the winter period when work went on with virtually no interruptions due to adverse weather conditions. Progress was made on the construction of the new sewage disposal works on a site at Town Lots Allotments.

During the summer months the sewer gang commenced rain water disconnection work from houses connected to the old sewers in readiness for reconnecting the foul drainage to the new sewers when the latter are commissioned for use.

The total amount of rain water disconnection work and house connections from the new sewers to the boundary of premises was as follows:-

R.W.disconnection drains 4" & 6" diam.	1229 yds.
House connection drains to boundary 4" diam.	698 "
6" "	122 "
Total	<u>2,049 "</u>

Apart from the post war housing estates at Doddington and Wimblington, the houses in these two villages are served by old combined storm and foul sewers which discharge to a variety of outfalls consisting of obsolete works or simple catchpits which perform no useful function other than acting as detritus tanks, intercepting some of the heavier solids before the sewage water continues into land drainage dykes. The Great Ouse River Board has granted consent for these sub-standard outfalls to continue for a limited period. During the year the Council instructed

a firm of Civil Engineers to prepare a Preliminary Report of a comprehensive main drainage scheme for sewerage from Doddington and Wimblington discharging to a combined works for the two villages. The report for this scheme estimated to cost £230,160. excluding fees, cost of land and compensation, was considered, approved and adopted by the Council in November, and it was agreed that negotiations be entered into with the owners of land required for the scheme.

The majority of houses which are situated in the unsewered areas of the District are provided with cesspool or septic tank drainage, and the Council operates an emptying service through a Contractor, one free emptying per annum being allowed. There is still a considerable number of houses equipped with pail closets at Manea.

PUBLIC CLEANSING.

Nightsoil, which is collected by contractors, is composted with straw for use as manure on arable land. The contracts provide for three collections of closet pails per fortnight, the number of closets being dealt with at the end of the year was 202. The number of pail closets converted to water closets in 1965 was 21, and 10 of these conversions were part of improvement grant schemes.

Closest Conversions 1965.

<u>Village.</u>	<u>Improvement Grant Schemes.</u>	<u>Others.</u>	<u>Total.</u>
Benwick	1	3	4
Doddington	1	1	2
Manea	7	4	11
Wimblington (with Stonea)	1	3	4
	<u>10</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>21</u>

The following table shows the progress of closet conversions during the past ten years:-

	<u>Grant Schemes.</u>	<u>Others.</u>	<u>Total.</u>
Previously reported			
1956 to 1964	97	199	296
1965	<u>10</u>	<u>11</u>	<u>21</u>
	<u>107</u>	<u>210</u>	<u>317</u>

Cesspools and vaults are emptied upon request from occupiers by one of the Contractors, who uses two cesspool emptiers for this purpose. The contents are either discharged over arable land or disposed of at the nightsoil tipping points.

REFUSE COLLECTION.

Collection of household refuse is made from the built up village areas once every fortnight by two separate Contractors employing the kerbside method. During the year the Council increased the frequency of collection of certain outlying areas, namely Forty Foot Bank (Doddington and Benwick parishes) and Purls Bridge Road (Manea parish) from quarterly to every four weeks, and also extended the service to other sparsely populated areas, namely Floods Ferry Road, Benwick, and Fifties Road, Manea. Disposal is by tipping in disused gravel pits, where the refuse is levelled and covered periodically with soil.

MILK SUPPLY.

The whole of the Council's district is within a "designated area" for the supply of milk, which in the main is distributed by two firms operating from dairies outside the Council's area. There is one producer retailer operating in the District.

MEAT AND OTHER FOOD INSPECTION.

There are now no licensed slaughterhouses in the Rural District, the seven butchers who have shops in the Area have the animals they purchase slaughtered in the neighbouring Urban Districts of March and Chatteris.

FOOD PREMISES.

(i). The number of food premises in the area is as follows:-

Grocers, general provision stores and confectioners	23
Butchers 	7
Bakers 	2
Fried Fish Shops 	5
Cafes 	1
Licensed Premises... 	11

(ii). 19 premises are registered under Section 16 of the Food and Drugs Act, 1955, for the sale of ice cream. No ice cream is manufactured in the area and all the retailers sell prepacked ice cream, which in every case is stored in proper refrigerator cabinets. There are no dairies in the District.

(iii). 8 inspections of registered food premises were made during the year.

(iv). No new educational activity was undertaken during the year.

(v). Condemned tinstuffs are normally disposed of by burial at the refuse dumps.

(vi). No examination of whole consignments of food was necessary.

(viii). There are no ice cream manufacturers in the area.

(viii). An abstract of the provisions of the new Food Hygiene Regulations 1955/56 has been distributed to all food premises in the District. 37 visits were made to food premises during the year. Byelaws for handling food were adopted by the Council in 1951 under Section 15 of the Food and Drugs Act 1938.

MOVEABLE DWELLINGS.

There are no large caravan sites in the Council's area. Two site licences for single caravans were issued during 1965 under the Caravan Sites and Control of Development Act, 1960. Renewal of planning permission for one unoccupied caravan on a farm site was refused by the County Planning Authority and action was being taken by the same Body in connection with another single caravan site at Doddington, in respect of which renewal of planning permission had been refused in the previous year. At the end of the year there were only 3 licensed caravan sites in the area.

RODENT CONTROL.

Very few complaints have been received regarding rats and mice. The Council do not possess the necessary staff to carry out rodent destruction work other than that confined to sewer dykes and refuse disposal tips. Owing to the pressure of other work it is not possible to devote much time to rodent control

inspections, but all complaints are investigated and the opportunity to check for the presence of vermin is taken when premises are visited in connection with other matters. Good liaison is maintained with the local officials of the Pest Department of the Ministry of Agriculture Fisheries and Food.

FACTORIES ACTS, 1937 to 1959.

Prescribed Particulars of the Administration of the
Factories Act, 1937.

PART 1 OF THE ACT.

1 - INSPECTIONS for purposes of provisions as to health.

Premises (1)	Number on Register. (2)	Number of		
		Inspec- tions, (3)	Written Notices (4)	Occupiers Prosecuted (5)
(i) Factories in which Sections 1,2,3,4 & 6 are to be enforced by Local Authorities...	4	3	-	-
(ii) Factories not included in (i) in which Section 7 is enforced by Local Authority	22	14	-	-
(iii) Other Premises in which Section 7 is enforced by the Local Authority (excluding out-workers' premises)	18	29	-	-
Total.....	44	46	-	-

2 - Cases in which DEFECTS were found

Particulars (1)	Number of cases in which defects were found				Number of cases in which prosecutions were instituted. (6)
	Found (2)	Remedied (3)	Referred To H.M. Inspector (4)	By H.M. Inspector (5)	
Want of cleanliness (S.1.).....	3	3	-	-	-
Overcrowding (S.2).	-	-	-	-	-
Unreasonable temperature (S.3.).	-	-	-	-	-
Inadequate Ventilation (S.4)..	-	-	-	-	-

Particulars (1)	Number of cases in which defects were found				Number of cases in which prosecutions were instituted. (6)
	Found (2)	Remedied (3)	Referred To H.M. Inspector (4)	By H.M. Inspector (5)	
Ineffective drainage to floors (S.6).....	-	-	-	-	-
Sanitary Conveniences (S.7)					
(a) Insufficient	3	3	-	-	-
(b) Unsuitable or defective.....	1	1	-	-	-
(c) Not separate for sexes.....	-	-	-	-	-
Other offences against the Act (not including offences relating to Outwork).....	-	-	-	-	-
Total	4	4	-	-	-

PART VIII OF THE ACT

Outwork

(Section 110 and 111)

There are no outworkers in the district.

THE OFFICES, SHOPS AND RAILWAY PREMISES ACT, 1963.

The following table sets out the information returned to the Ministry of Labour in connection with the above Act which came into operation in 1964

TABLE A.

REGISTRATIONS AND GENERAL INSPECTIONS.

(1) Class of Premises.	(2) Premises registered during the year	Total registered premises end of year	Registered premises receiving general inspection during the year.
Offices.....	-	8	7
Retail shops.....	-	19	14
Wholesale shops, warehouses	-	-	-
Catering establishments open to the public, canteens...	-	1	1
Fuel storage depots.....	-	1	1
Totals	-	29	23

TABLE B

NUMBER OF VISITS OF ALL KINDS BY INSPECTORS TO REGISTERED PREMISES

33

TABLE C

ANALYSIS OF PERSONS EMPLOYED IN REGISTERED PREMISES BY WORKPLACE

Class of workplace (1)	Number of persons employed (2)
Offices.....	22
Retail shops.....	44
Wholesale departments, warehouses..	•
Catering establishments open to the public.....	2
Canteens.....	-
Fuel storage depots.....	1
Total	69
Total Males	21
Total Females	48

J. METCALFE,

Public Health Inspector.

